have no plan or willingness to undertake mining operation in the concerned lignite block.

(b) The present arrangement is under review.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) NLC proposes to utilise the deposits from this block for an Underground Coal Gasification project, which was sanctioned on 08.08.2005 and it is expected to be completed within four years from the date of sanction.

(e) No, Sir, in view of the reply given to part 'd' above.

**Road network in NER**

*502. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

WW the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to allocate Rs. 50,000 crore to expand the road network in the NE Region;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what is the action plan of Government to carry out similar activity to expand road network the most-backward tribal-dominated regions of Orissa to alleviate poverty of this region?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) An amount of Rs. 1142.8 crore has been allocated in the budget of this Ministry for 2007-08 for development of National Highways, State roads under the Central Road Fund scheme, strategic roads and roads included under Special Accelerated Road Development Programme in North Eastern Region. In addition provision for the ongoing portion in Assam in the East-West corridor *i.e.* National Highways Development Project-Ill exists in the budget of National Highways Authority of India.

(c) The Ministry is primarily responsible for development and maintenance of National Highways and selected State roads under the

Central Road Fund Scheme. Apart from the special programme like National Highways Development Project (which is taken up for the whole country) and Special Accelerated Road Development Programme for the North Eastern Region, the development of National Highways is generally undertaken through annual plans State-wise. No specific programme has been formulated for the development of backward region in the country. Development of State roads is the responsibility of concerned State Government. However, this Ministry gives Central assistance to develop State roads through Central Road Fund scheme.

**Autonomy to CBI**

†* 503. SHRI SHATRUGHAN SINHA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government intend to provide autonomy to the Central Bureau of Investigation in order to maintain its credibility;

(b) if so, the action being taken in this regard; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI): (a) to (c) The CBI has been accorded autonomy under the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946 as amended by the Central Vigilance Commission Act, 2003 for investigation of cases.

**Proposals for Four-laning of NHs in Rajasthan**

*504. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the State Government of Rajasthan have proposed four-laning of NH-11 (Jaipur-Reengus-Sikar road section), NH-12 (Jaipur-Tonk-Kota-Jhalawar road section) up to MP border, NH-14 (Beawar-Pali-Sirohi road section) and NH-8 (Beawar-Udaipur section);

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.